

# Parish Report February 2018

## Councillor

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### Police catch 50 drivers using mobiles in first 2 days of campaign

**Police caught almost as many drivers using mobile phones in the first two days of a campaign as they did during an entire week's purge last year.**

Despite the widely publicised launch of Operation Ringtone in Ipswich, at least 50 drivers across the county chose to put their licences, purses and safety in jeopardy by picking up the phone while behind the wheel in the first two days.

Officers followed up on their promise to carry out patrols in marked and unmarked vehicles throughout this week – issuing 26 traffic offence reports on Monday and 24 the following day. Operation Ringtone was launched at Ipswich waterfront on Monday, in line with a nationwide campaign led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). The campaign includes a week of patrols as part of an effort to combat the “fatal four” main factors in collisions resulting in death and serious injury (speeding, seatbelts, mobile devices and drink/drug driving).

Last year, when penalties were increased to six points and a £200 fine, 1,179 notices were issued in Suffolk for driving while using a phone – with 62 people caught during a week of action in July. Licences will be cancelled if drivers incur six or more points within two years of passing their driving test. It is also an offence to use a phone while a vehicle is stationary with the engine running.

### Additional £21 million to resurface and repair Suffolk's Roads

Suffolk County Council has announced new plans to invest an additional £21 million in resurfacing and repairing the county's roads in the next three years.

The plans, revealed as part of a report recommending what the council's budget for 2018/19 should be, will see 1,000 miles of roads in Suffolk resurfaced by March 2021, a quarter of all the roads that Suffolk County Council is responsible for. This is a commitment made in the council's Our Priorities report published in 2017.

This investment would improve the quality of roads, reduce the number of potholes and enhance the experience of Suffolk's road users. It also makes sound financial sense as preventing deterioration will avoid the need to spend more money on reactive maintenance over the same period and in future years. Over 227 miles of Suffolk roads were surface dressed or machined surfaced during the summer of 2017.

The funding will boost Suffolk Highways' road maintenance and improvement spending in 2018/19 alone by 21% - £40 million in total. The money is still to be approved by councillors at both Cabinet and Full Council meetings between now and February 2018.

If approved, the £21 million will be specifically targeted at maintaining Suffolk's existing road network. Confirming this investment now will enable Suffolk Highways to start planning and preparing this financial year to carry out the additional works across the next three years, based on a thorough assessment of need.

The extra money will be allocated to roads and infrastructure where there is the greatest need. These works will be planned carefully to make the most of the warmer summer weather when surface dressing needs to be done and conditions are the best for machine surfacing.

This work will be fully coordinated to reduce the impact on road users. It's not possible to confirm the locations of this work at this early stage. Assessments will be made by skilled technical officers using all of the data and information that is available to them.

### **Increase in hourly funding rate for childcare providers in Suffolk**

The hourly base rate paid to childcare providers in Suffolk will increase from £3.87 per hour to £4.00 per hour from April 2018. The decision comes following a meeting with Schools Forum representatives on 11 January 2018.

There will also be changes to the allocation of Deprivation and Inclusion funding for eligible children. From April, Deprivation funding will be allocated based on the number of hours a child attends a setting. The eligibility criteria for this measure will remain the same. Inclusion funding will be targeted at the needs of individual children. This means the funding will be targeted where it is most needed. The total amount of funding the council allocates for Deprivation and the Inclusion Fund will remain the same.

Suffolk is one of only 25% of authorities to see a reduction in funding following the Early Years Funding Reform and from April 2018, the amount of funding the council will receive from government will reduce further. This means that the council has to consider how best to allocate the reduced resources.

The council currently retains 6.3% of funding received from government to carry out statutory support services for parents and providers. 93.7% is passed on to providers. From April 2018, 96.2% of the funding the council receives from Government will be passed on to providers through the base rate of £4.00 per hour per child, Inclusion and Deprivation funding. This exceeds the statutory requirement of 95%. The authority will retain 3.8% to carry out its statutory support services.

### **CQC Rates West Suffolk Hospital Outstanding**

A Suffolk NHS trust, which provides hospital and community care to local people, has been ranked as one of the best in the country by regulators in its latest inspection.

The Bury St Edmunds based West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (WSFT) is celebrating a top start to 2018 after receiving the highest rating, 'outstanding', from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – one of just seven general hospitals in England, and the only one in the Midlands and East region, to hold the accolade.

Inspectors said WSFT staff 'truly respected and valued patients and individuals and empowered them as partners in their care, practically and emotionally, by offering an exceptional and distinctive service.' They also said: 'On all the wards we visited, staff displayed a culture of compassion and positivity, and had a genuine desire to want to provide the best possible care to patients.'

The Care Quality Commission visited the Trust in November last year, inspecting its end-of-life and outpatient services and reviewing how well-led the organisation was.

The Trust was rated outstanding for being caring, effective and well-led, and good for being safe and responsive.

Chief executive Stephen Dunn said the Trust was immensely proud of the achievement: "We are absolutely delighted to have received an outstanding rating".

The new year boost comes after the busiest winter the Trust has seen, which has seen record numbers of emergency attendances and admissions to the hospital. December saw a 6% rise in people admitted to the hospital than in the same month the previous year.

But despite these challenges, CQC inspectors said staff had risen to the occasion. Referring to conversations had with patients and their families, they said: 'Feedback from people who used the services, those who are close to them, and stakeholders, was continually positive about the way staff treated people. Staff were highly motivated and inspired to offer care that was kind and promoted people's dignity.'

The report also praised the Trust for its excellent cancer recognition and treatment times, and for having an excellent staff talent programme tailored to supporting leaders across all levels of the organisation – not just those traditionally seen as being senior figures.

Of the organisation's leadership team, the CQC noted that the Trust had 'compassionate, inclusive and effective leadership at all levels', and that staff felt they were well supported to make positive changes and innovations – also reflected in the latest NHS Staff Survey (2016), where the Trust achieved the best staff engagement score in the country.

The Trust was last inspected in March 2016, when it was rated as good overall. In its latest report, the CQC noted that there had been a focus on improving care 'across the organisation'.